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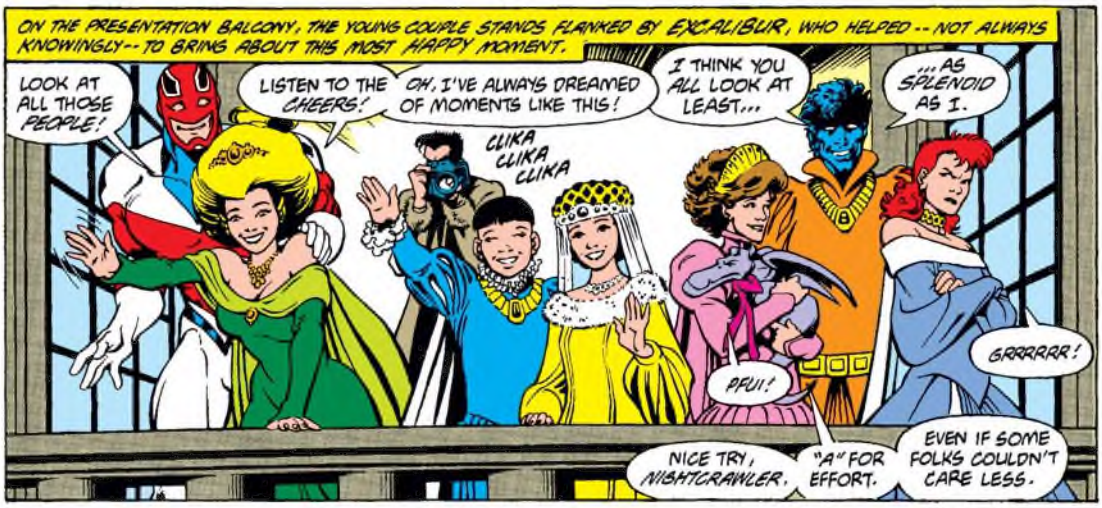
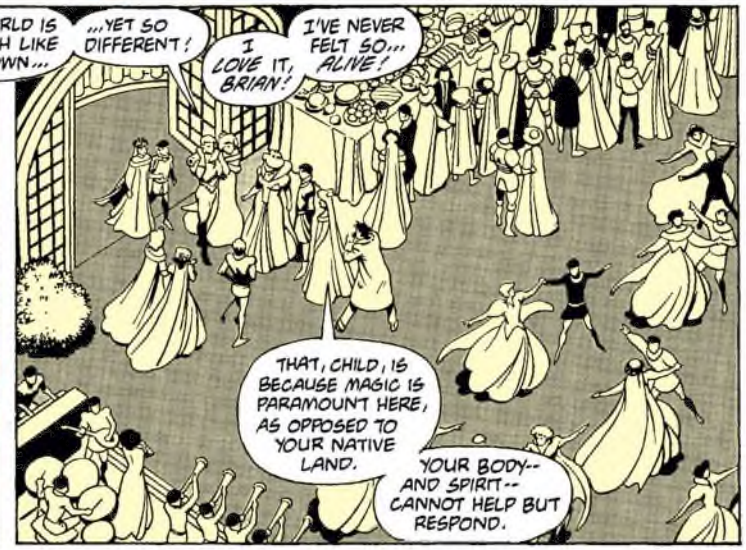
AUTHORITY
THE CROSS-TIME CAPER
EXCALIBUR
ALAN DAVIS
NEARY

FROM THE COURT CIRCULAR, THE ROYAL PALACE AT WESTMINSTER -- 4 JULY, 1989:
THEIR ROYAL SOVEREIGNS, THE KING AND QUEEN—WITH THE BLESSING OF HER IMPERIAL MAJESTY, THE QUEEN MOTHER—WISH TODAY TO ANNOUNCE THE BETROTHAL OF THEIR MOST BELOVED SON, WILLIAM, PRINCE OF WALES, TO HER ROYAL HIGHNESS, THE PRINCESS KATHERINE.
STAN LEE PRESENTS
TOO MANY HEROES
STARRING EXCALIBUR
CHRIS CLAREMONT WRITER · ALAN DAVIS PENCILER
PAUL NEARY INKER · AGUSTIN MAS LETTERER
GLYNIS OLIVER COLORIST · TERRY KAVANAGH EDITOR
TOM DeFALCO CHIEF CORRESPONDENT
IT'S AN ANNOUNCEMENT ALL LONDON -- NAY, THE ENTIRE REALM -- HAS BEEN EAGERLY AWAITING.
AND WHEN IT COMES, THE ASSEMBLED CROWD MAKES NO SECRET OF ITS FEELINGS.
ANTHRA
BBC
STEREO


ON THE PRESENTATION BALCONY, THE YOUNG COUPLE STANDS FLANKED BY EXCALIBUR, WHO HELPED -- NOT ALWAYS KNOWINGLY -- TO BRING ABOUT THIS MOST HAPPY MOMENT.
LOOK AT ALL THOSE PEOPLE!
LISTEN TO THE CHEERS!
OH, I'VE ALWAYS DREAMED OF MOMENTS LIKE THIS!
I THINK YOU ALL LOOK AT LEAST...
...AS SPLENDID AS I.
CLIKA CLIKA CLIKA
PFUI!
GRRRRRR!
NICE TRY, NIGHTCRAWLER.
"A" FOR EFFORT.
EVEN IF SOME FOLKS COULDN'T CARE LESS.

INSIDE, EVERYONE.
TIME TO REJOIN THE PARTY.
THIS WORLD IS SO MUCH LIKE OUR OWN...
...YET SO DIFFERENT!


I LOVE IT, BRIAN!
I'VE NEVER FELT SO... ALIVE!
THAT, CHILD, IS BECAUSE MAGIC IS PARAMOUNT HERE, AS OPPOSED TO YOUR NATIVE LAND.
YOUR BODY-- AND SPIRIT-- CANNOT HELP BUT RESPOND.

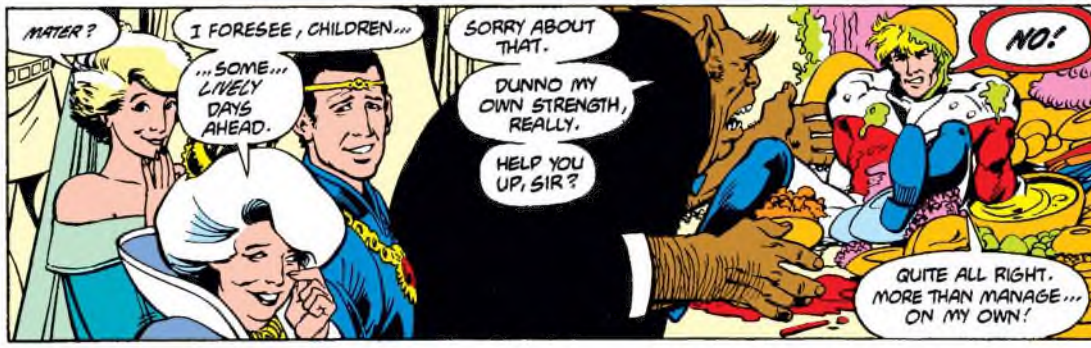
CAPTAIN BRITAIN, ONE IS QUITE FASCINATED BY YOUR HOMEWORLD, WHERE I UNDERSTAND THE ARTS ARCANE ARE SUBORDINATE TO THE "SCIENCES."
ACTUALLY, SIR, THOSE ARTS YOU REFER TO ARE VIRTUALLY NON-EXISTENT.
THE STUFF OF STORY AND LEGEND.

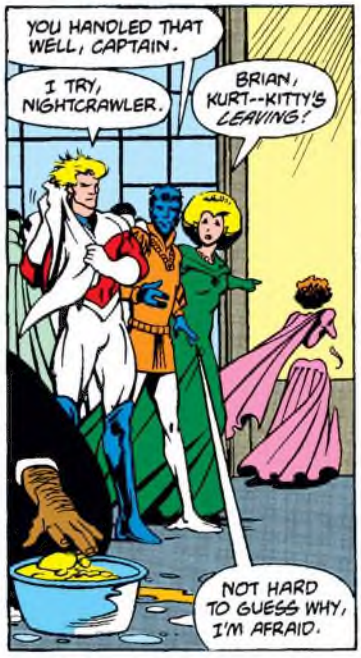
AND ENGLAND HERSELF IS FAR LESS A POWER THERE THAN HERE.
HOW SAD.
IF YOU'LL EXCUSE US, MAJESTY...
...I BELIEVE LADY MEGGAN WOULD LIKE TO DANCE.
WITH KURT...

... BUT NOT HER SUPPOSED SWEETIE, BRIAN?
UH--
--OH!
RACHEL...?
SURE, WHAT THE HECK, I CERTAINLY CAN'T LOOK ANY SILLIER.

PLEASE, CAPTAIN--THERE'S SO MUCH MORE ONE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR.
BUT I, ER, AH, MES--OF COURSE, SIRE.
'SCUSE ME, SIR, BEGGIN' YOUR PARDON.
YOU! THE OGRE!
LADY KAT'S BUTLER, SIR, THAT'M I.
JUST WISHED TO APOLOGIZE FOR MY ATTACKIN' YOU B'FORE.* OBEYIN' MY B'LOVED MISTRESS'S ORDERS, I WAS.
*EXCALIBUR #12.--T.K.

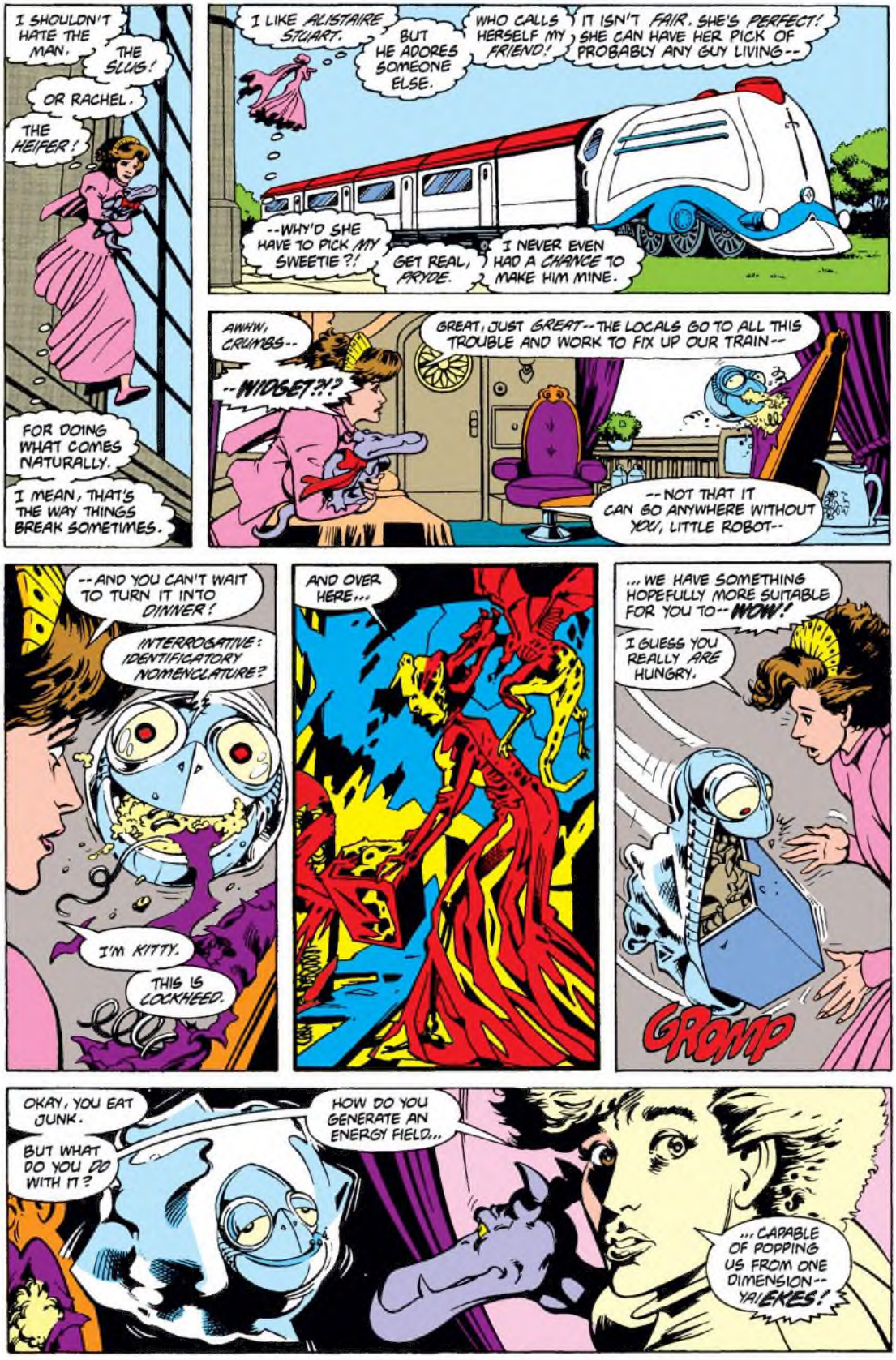
I QUITE UNDERSTAND. NO HARM DONE. NO HARD FEELINGS.
WHATTASORT YOU ARE, SIR!
A RIGHT PROPER GENNELMUN--
--OOPS.
SWAP
!
SPLAM
GLOOP
FLUGD
PLISH
ZLUMPT


MATER?
I FORESEE, CHILDREN...
...SOME... LIVELY DAYS AHEAD.
SORRY ABOUT THAT.
DUNNO MY OWN STRENGTH, REALLY.
HELP YOU UP, SIR?
NO!
QUITE ALL RIGHT. MORE THAN MANAGE... ON MY OWN!


YOU HANDLED THAT WELL, CAPTAIN.
I TRY, NIGHTCRAWLER.
BRIAN, KURT--KITTY'S LEAVING!
NOT HARD TO GUESS WHY, I'M AFRAID.

POOR GIRL ISN'T AS GOOD...
...AT HIDING HER FEELINGS FOR ALISTAIRE...
...AS SHE LIKES TO THINK.

NOR ARE YOU, MY FRIEND.
OR DO YOU BOTH BELIEVE ME SO THICK...
...I WOULDN'T NOTICE?


I SHOULDN'T HATE THE MAN.
THE SLUG!
OR RACHEL.
THE HEIFER!
FOR DOING WHAT COMES NATURALLY.
I MEAN, THAT'S THE WAY THINGS BREAK SOMETIMES.
I LIKE ALISTAIRE STUART.
BUT HE ADORES SOMEONE ELSE.
WHO CALLS HERSELF MY FRIEND!
IT ISN'T FAIR. SHE'S PERFECT! SHE CAN HAVE HER PICK OF PROBABLY ANY GUY LIVING--
--WHY'D SHE HAVE TO PICK MY SWEETIE?!
GET REAL, ARYDE.
I NEVER EVEN HAD A CHANCE TO MAKE HIM MINE.
AWWW, CRUMBS--
--WIDGET?!?
GREAT, JUST GREAT--THE LOCALS GO TO ALL THIS TROUBLE AND WORK TO FIX UP OUR TRAIN--
--NOT THAT IT CAN GO ANYWHERE WITHOUT YOU, LITTLE ROBOT--
--AND YOU CAN'T WAIT TO TURN IT INTO DINNER!
INTERROGATIVE: IDENTIFICATORY NOMENCLATURE?
I'M KITTY.
THIS IS LOCKHEED.
AND OVER HERE...
...WE HAVE SOMETHING HOPEFULLY MORE SUITABLE FOR YOU TO--WOW!
I GUESS YOU REALLY ARE HUNGRY.
GROMP
OKAY, YOU EAT JUNK.
BUT WHAT DO YOU DO WITH IT?
HOW DO YOU GENERATE AN ENERGY FIELD...
...CAPABLE OF POPPING US FROM ONE DIMENSION--YAI EKES!

THAT FLASH-- UH-OH-- IT'S PHOENIX!
BOY, DOES SHE LOOK MIFFED.
AND THE STOOGE RESPONSIBLE DOESN'T HAVE SENSE ENOUGH TO QUIT WHILE HE'S AHEAD.
MY DEAR LADY--
--WAS IT SOMETHING I SAID?
NIGEL FROBISHER.
WHO?
RACHEL HAD A RUN-IN WITH HIS ANALOGUE BACK HOME.
THIS CHAP APPEARS CUT FROM THE SAME CLOTH.

NOT WHAT YOU SAID, BUSTER--
--WHAT YOU THOUGHT!

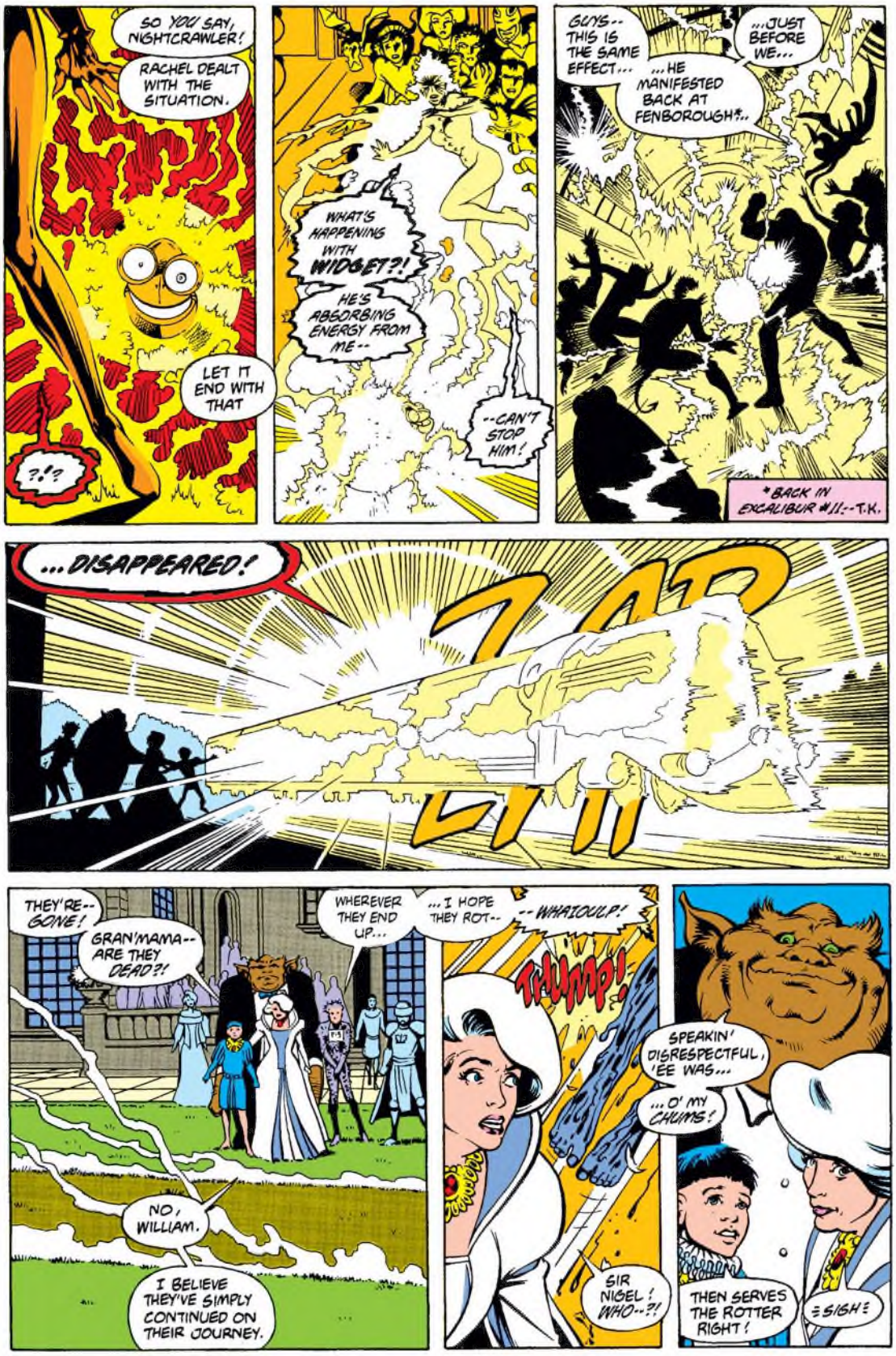
I...
...SAY!
Pig

TAR AND FEATHERS-- SIGH-- RACHEL!
MICROCEPHALIC NEANDERTHAL, WHAT KIND OF PERSON DOES HE THINK I AM, LUCKY I DIDN'T--!

PHOENIX!
MUST I REMIND YOU--
--WE'RE GUESTS IN THIS REALM--
--WITH AN OBLIGATION TO BEHAVE!

IF I CAN HOLD MY TEMPER--
YOU SAY I BEHAVED BADLY.
I SAY I HAD CAUSE!
THESE ARE THE IMAGES I PICKED UP FROM HIS BRAIN!

THAT SWINE--
--UNHAND ME, THE LOT OF YOU, LET ME AT THAT WRETCH, I'LL TEACH HIM SOME PROPER MANNERS!
CAP! CAP! CAP!
CONTROL YOURSELF!
THERE'S BEEN NO REAL HARM DONE!


SO YOU SAY, NIGHTCRAWLER!
RACHEL DEALT WITH THE SITUATION.
LET IT END WITH THAT
?!?
WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH WIDGET?!
HE'S ABSORBING ENERGY FROM ME--
--CAN'T STOP HIM!
GUYS-- THIS IS THE SAME EFFECT...
...JUST BEFORE WE...
...HE MANIFESTED BACK AT FENBOROUGH*...
*BACK IN EXCALIBUR #11:--T.K.
...DISAPPEARED!
THEY'RE-- GONE!
GRAN'MAMA-- ARE THEY DEAD?!
NO, WILLIAM.
I BELIEVE THEY'VE SIMPLY CONTINUED ON THEIR JOURNEY.
WHEREVER THEY END UP...
...I HOPE THEY ROT--
--WHAIOULP!
THUMP!
SIR NIGEL! WHO--?!
SPEAKIN' DISRESPECTFUL, 'EE WAS...
...O' MY CHUMS!
THEN SERVES THE ROTTER RIGHT!
≡SIGH≡

OOPS.
TO PUT IT MILDLY!

DON'T BE SNAPPY, KITTY, IT WASN'T RACHEL'S FAULT.
ENTIRELY.
AT LEAST WE'VE A NOTION HOW TO MAKE WIDGET GO.
LUCKY US.
DEPENDING ON WHERE WE'VE ENDED UP.

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THE REST OF YOU...
...BUT THIS TERRAIN LOOKS AWFULLY FAMILIAR.
OUR LIGHTHOUSE!
CAP--KURT, EVERYONE--
--WE'RE HOME!

WHAT AN EXPERIENCE!
I WONDER HOW WIDGET KNEW...
NOW, KATZCHEN, BEST NOT TO LOOK A GIFT ROBOT...
...WHERE TO TAKE US?
MEGGAN, WHAT'S THE MATTER?
THE WATER, BRIAN.

IT'S WRONG!
TIDE'S DEFINITELY LOWER THAN EVER I'VE SEEN IT.
AND STILL DROPPING, EVEN AS WE WATCH.

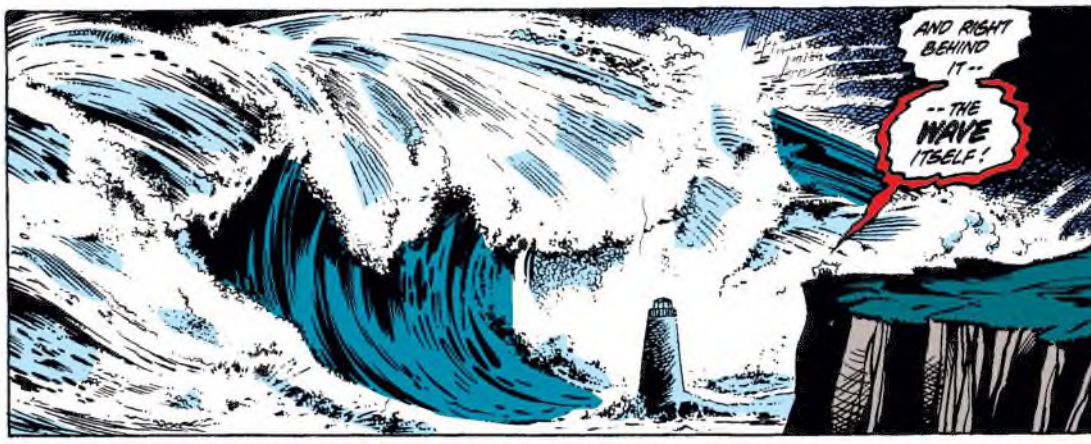
THERE'S A STRANGENESS TO THE AIR AS WELL.
THE GROUND IS TREMBLING.
CERTAINLY QUIET.
EARTHQUAKE, PROFESSOR STUART?
NOT IN THIS NECK OF THE WOODS.
GUYS...
...GUYS!

I DON'T THINK IT'S THE GROUND YOU HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT.

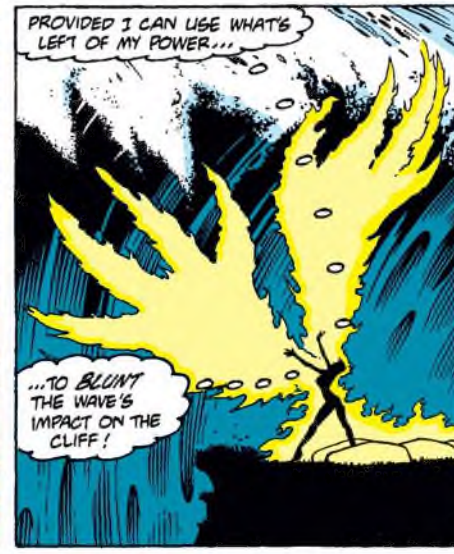
IT'S WHAT'S ABOUT TO HIT IT!

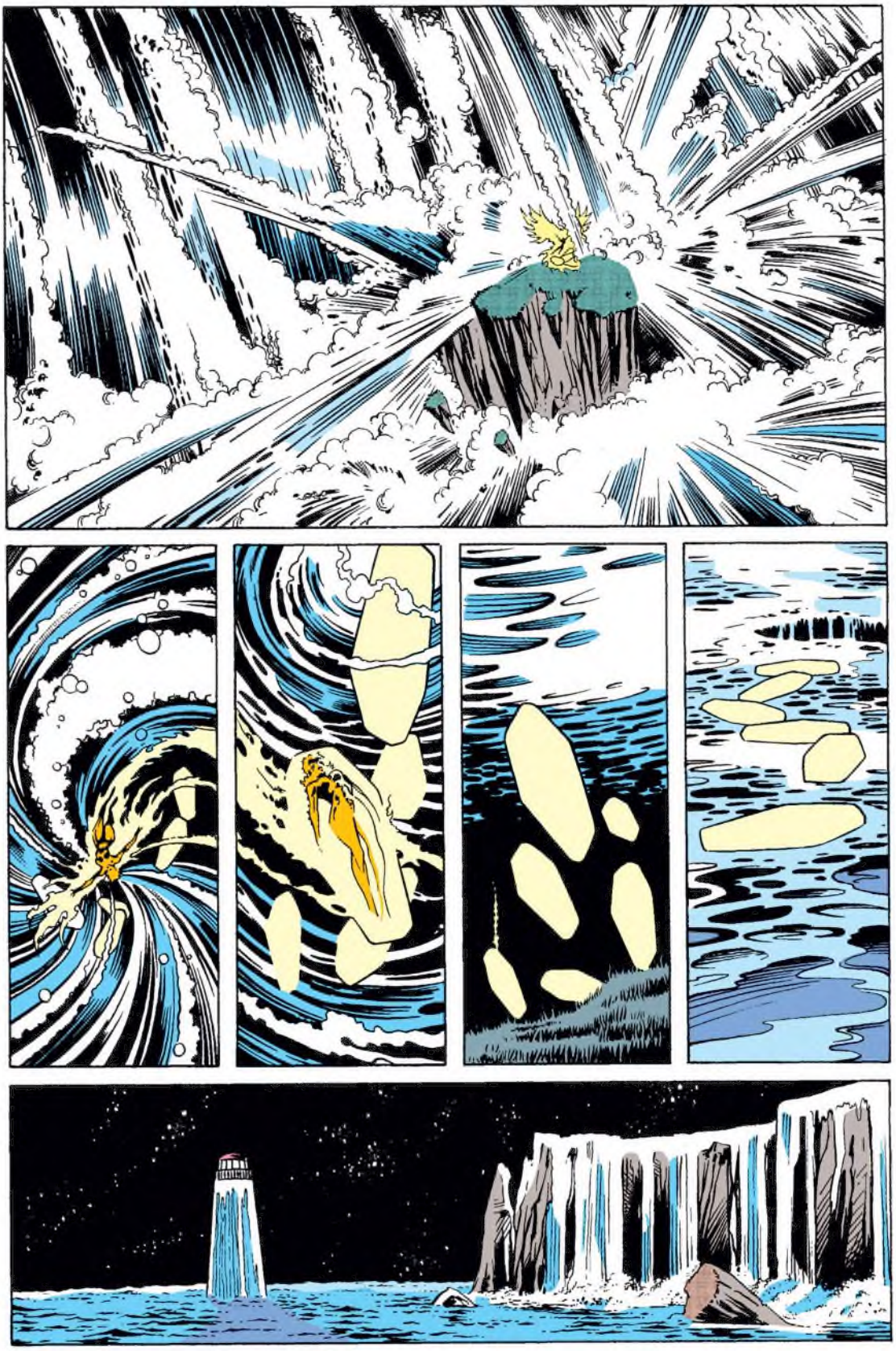
FASCINATING.
THAT FAR OUT TO SEA, GIVEN THE DEPTH OF THE OCEAN FLOOR...
...BY THE TIME THAT WAVE REACHES SHORE...
...IT COULD BE BETTER THAN THREE HUNDRED METERS TALL.
A THOUSAND FEET--?!!
MOVING SO FAST, PUSHING THE AIR BEFORE IT LIKE A SOLID WALL!
WE'VE GOT TO GET AWAY!

NO TIME!
THAT MONSTER'S MOVING AT SUPERSONIC SPEED!
BRACE YOURSELVES--
--HERE COMES THE SHOCK WAVE!


AND RIGHT BEHIND IT--
--THE WAVE ITSELF!

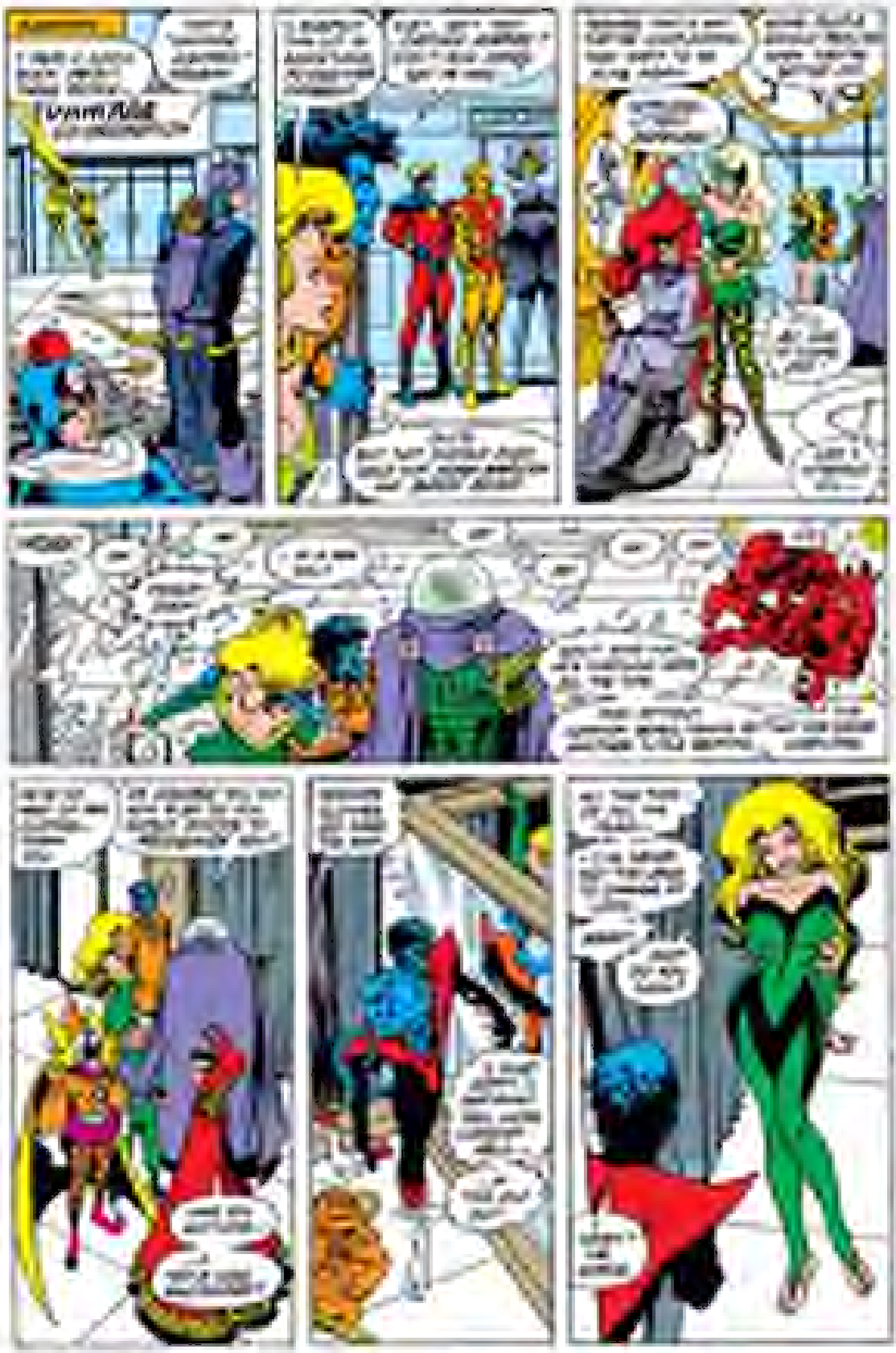
DIMENSIONAL JAUNT DRAINED PRETTY MUCH ALL MY STRENGTH--
--TOO WEAK TO CARRY EVERYONE AWAY--
--CAP AN' MEG CAN'T FLY FAST ENOUGH, CARRYING PASSENGERS.
COCOONS THEIR ONLY CHANCE.

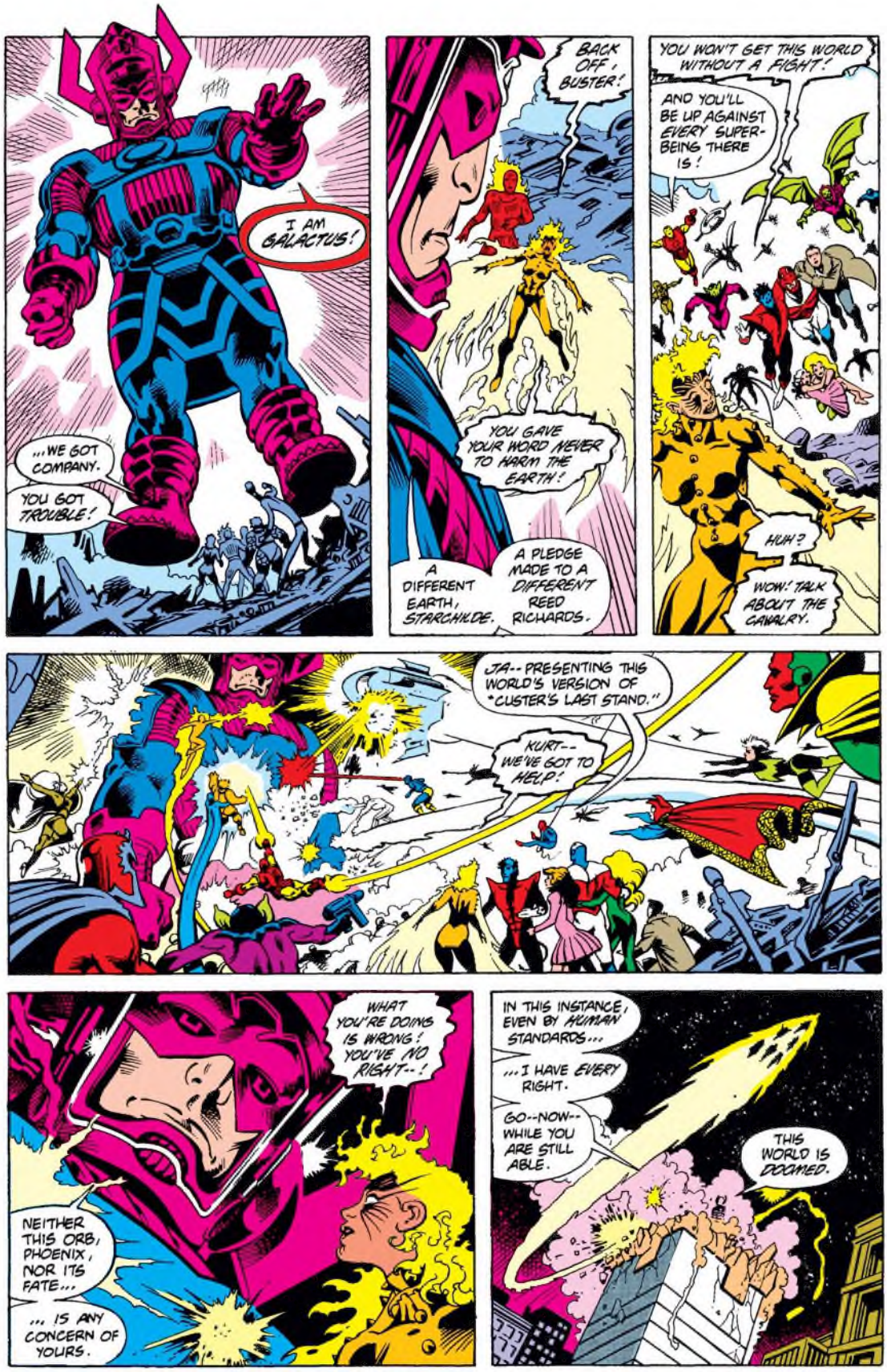

PROVIDED I CAN USE WHAT'S LEFT OF MY POWER...
...TO BLUNT THE WAVE'S IMPACT ON THE CLIFF!

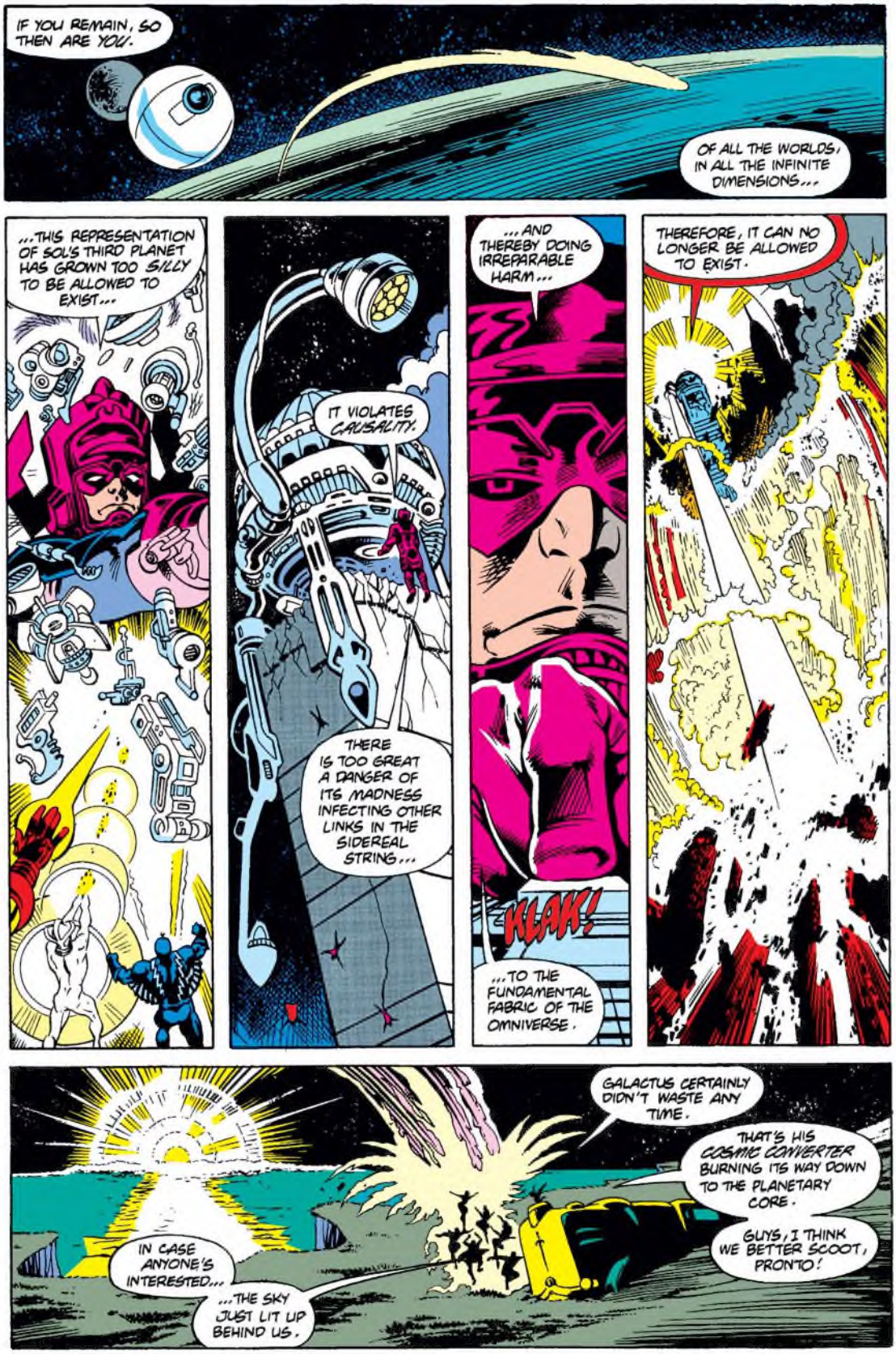


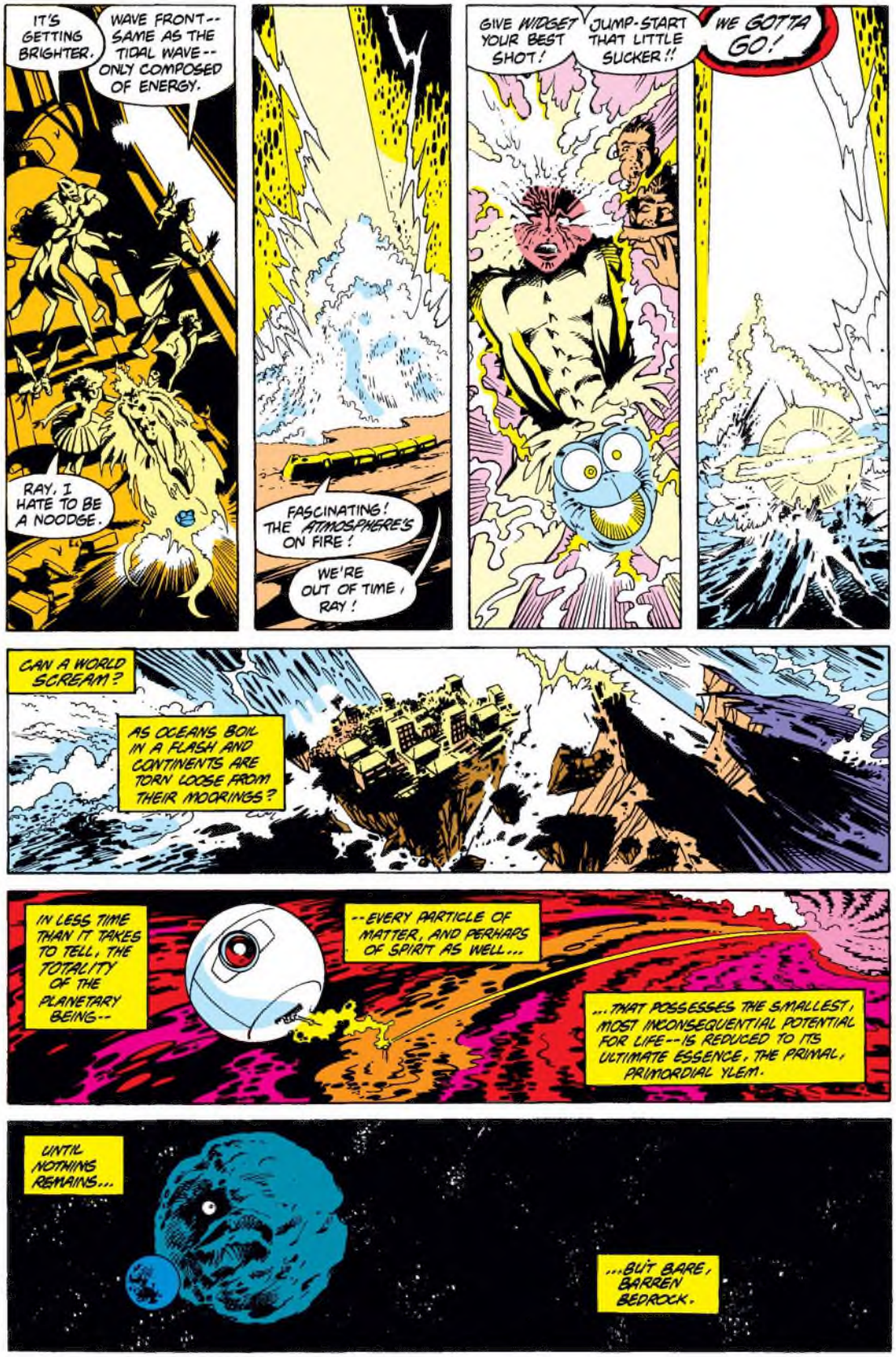
POOM

HOORAY!




I AM GALACTUS!
...WE GOT COMPANY.
YOU GOT TROUBLE!
BACK OFF, BUSTER!
YOU GAVE YOUR WORD NEVER TO HARM THE EARTH!
A DIFFERENT EARTH, STARCHILDE.
A PLEDGE MADE TO A DIFFERENT REED RICHARDS.
YOU WON'T GET THIS WORLD WITHOUT A FIGHT!
AND YOU'LL BE UP AGAINST EVERY SUPER-BEING THERE IS!
HUH?
WOW! TALK ABOUT THE CAVALRY.
JA--PRESENTING THIS WORLD'S VERSION OF "CUSTER'S LAST STAND."
KURT--WE'VE GOT TO HELP!
WHAT YOU'RE DOING IS WRONG! YOU'VE NO RIGHT--!
NEITHER THIS ORB, PHOENIX, NOR ITS FATE...
... IS ANY CONCERN OF YOURS.
IN THIS INSTANCE, EVEN BY HUMAN STANDARDS...
...I HAVE EVERY RIGHT.
GO--NOW--WHILE YOU ARE STILL ABLE.
THIS WORLD IS DOOMED.


IF YOU REMAIN, SO THEN ARE YOU.
OF ALL THE WORLDS, IN ALL THE INFINITE DIMENSIONS...
...THIS REPRESENTATION OF SOL'S THIRD PLANET HAS GROWN TOO SILLY TO BE ALLOWED TO EXIST...
IT VIOLATES CAUSALITY.
THERE IS TOO GREAT A DANGER OF ITS MADNESS INFECTING OTHER LINKS IN THE SIDEREAL STRING...
...AND THEREBY DOING IRREPARABLE HARM...
KLAK!
...TO THE FUNDAMENTAL FABRIC OF THE OMNIVERSE.
THEREFORE, IT CAN NO LONGER BE ALLOWED TO EXIST.
GALACTUS CERTAINLY DIDN'T WASTE ANY TIME.
THAT'S HIS COSMIC CONVERTER BURNING ITS WAY DOWN TO THE PLANETARY CORE.
GUYS, I THINK WE BETTER SCOOT, PRONTO!
IN CASE ANYONE'S INTERESTED...
...THE SKY JUST LIT UP BEHIND US.


IT'S GETTING BRIGHTER.
WAVE FRONT-- SAME AS THE TIDAL WAVE-- ONLY COMPOSED OF ENERGY.
RAY, I HATE TO BE A NOODGE.
FASCINATING! THE ATMOSPHERE'S ON FIRE!
WE'RE OUT OF TIME, RAY!
GIVE WIDGET YOUR BEST SHOT!
JUMP-START THAT LITTLE SUCKER!!
WE GOTTA GO!
CAN A WORLD SCREAM?
AS OCEANS BOIL IN A FLASH AND CONTINENTS ARE TORN LOOSE FROM THEIR MOORINGS?
IN LESS TIME THAN IT TAKES TO TELL, THE TOTALITY OF THE PLANETARY BEING--
--EVERY PARTICLE OF MATTER, AND PERHAPS OF SPIRIT AS WELL...
...THAT POSSESSES THE SMALLEST, MOST INCONSEQUENTIAL POTENTIAL FOR LIFE--IS REDUCED TO ITS ULTIMATE ESSENCE, THE PRIMAL, PRIMORDIAL YLEM.
UNTIL NOTHING REMAINS...
...BUT BARE, BARREN BEDROCK.

IT IS DONE.
NO LIFE REMAINS...
...WHERE NONE SHOULD EVER HAVE BEEN BORN.
THIS EARTH'S DESTINY WAS TO BE A DEAD WORLD...
...UNTIL YOU INTERFERED.
I WASN'T DOING ANY HARM, JUST PLAYING WITH MY TOYS.
THEN CONSIDER PLAYTIME, OVER. AND THIS PLAYGROUND, FOREVER CLOSED.
IN YOUR OWN WAY, YOU ARE ALMOST AS GREAT A THREAT...
...AS THE PHOENIX-AVATAR.
CONSIDER THIS A WARNING.
FIND SOME OTHER MEANS OF AMUSEMENT.
OR I WILL DEAL WITH YOU...
...AS I SHALL SOON WITH HER.
HUMPH!
HUMPH!
PIP!
TEE-HEE!
HEY--
--ANYBODY NEED A PARTNER?!?
NEXT: TECHNET: IMPOSSIBLE MISSIONS!